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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA PRIORITY 0006
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0001
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RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [IR](#) [TC](#)

SUBJECT: DUBAI THINKTANK PLANNING TRACK II TALKS ON IRAN

CLASSIFIED BY: Ramin Asgard, Director, Iran Regional Presence
Office - Dubai, DOS.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (U) This is a joint message from Embassy Abu Dhabi, ConGen
Dubai, and IRPO.

¶2. (S/NF) On February 5, Ambassador met with Riad Khawaji,
founder and CEO of the Dubai-based defense think tank the
Institute for Near East and Military Analysis (INEGMA). Among
other things, he told Ambassador that he intends to hold a
conference in the early summer on the topic Iran. He has been
discussing this proposed conference with IRIG official Sayyed
Kazem Sajjadpour, the former IRIG Ambassador and Deputy
Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva. (Note: Ambassador
Sajjadpour may currently be working with an MFA affiliated
thinktank).

¶3. (S/NF) Two aspects of this project are of particular note.
First, while this is theoretically an academic conference, Riad
envisioned attendance by the top flight think tanks from Europe,
North America and Russia that are often surrogates for official
thinking. I urged him to think about USIP in addition to
Brookings, etc. Second, Sajjadpour, clearly thinking in Track
II terms, told Riad that it would be "easier" to hold free
discussions in Dubai than elsewhere, indicating a high level of
IRIG interest in possible track II discussions.

¶4. (S/NF) Meanwhile, Iranian government officials seizing upon
the initial signs from the new US administration, including
Majles Speaker Larijani, President Ahmadinejad, and IRGC founder
Mohsen Rezaie have stated over the past week the IRIG's
willingness to support a realistic reappraisal of regional
security thinking aimed at reducing regional tensions. The
willingness of at least one regime official to consider Dubai as
a venue may indicate the IRIG's interest in opening such
discussions up to an international audience.

ASGARD